

January 10, 1976

Dr. G. Keisar  
Ministry of Health  
Jerusalem, Israel

Dear Dr. Keisar,

I am delighted to have the opportunity to commend Dr. Yehudit Elkana for the Lewis Scholarship Fund.

I have had an excellent opportunity to observe Dr. Elkana's professional work since she spent a year (1973-74) as a visiting fellow in my laboratory. During this time she proved to be a most intelligent, conscientious, diligent, and observant research worker, the fact that she was entering into a somewhat novel field of molecular biology, notwithstanding. Her observations on the separation of DNA segments from Bacillus subtilis were the foundation of the current program of research in this laboratory on the expression of genes from one bacterial species in other hosts.

Since her return to Israel, I have remained in close contact with Dr. Elkana by correspondence and by personal visit in Jerusalem. She told me that she was most eager to apply her scientific skills to problems that might also be of some proximate importance for public health in her own country. From this standpoint her choice of studies on water-born infections, and in particular of hepatitis A, seems to be most appropriate. Not only will they promise to help an important public health problem in Israel; but the regional context also offers access to materials for investigation that may be uniquely suited for research in this field. I have been able to discuss her research program with her in some detail and believe it to be most promising of significant extensions of knowledge and practical application as well. She is also keenly aware of the hazards that may be involved in working with these important agents and has all of the skills and sense of responsibility requisite for such work.

Finally, the laboratory that she wishes to visit is by all odds the most appropriate place for the specific technical training and further investigation that she wishes to undertake in London. Professor Zuckerman is an outstanding authority in the field of hepatitis immunology, and Dr. Elkana will bring back sophisticated methods likely to be important both for her research and for immediate public health applications in Israel.

On all these counts I would judge Dr. Elkana to be an outstanding candidate for the fellowship.

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg  
Professor of Genetics

JL/rr